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“The Sing Off” a capella group carrying their tunes to Central

By Nic Cooper

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The Filipino-American a cappella group, The Filharmonic, have tunes a plenty and will be bringing their talents here to Ellensburg, as they wind down their 60-plus city nationwide tour.

“Being able to travel across the nation and meet everyone has been amazing,” said Niko Del Rey, the lone beatboxer of the group. “Constantly adding to our Filharmaniac family makes my heart so happy.”

What started as friendly chance encounters at singing competitions in college, turned into one cohesive group as the six banded their love for music together to compete on NBC’s “The Sing-Off.”

“The Sing-Off was an incredible experience for us,” bass vocalist Jules Cruz said. “It was our very first time performing as a group.”

As a group, they bring many different pieces to the table, combining performing arts, pop, a capella, jazz, opera, theater, classic and more to honor their Filipino heritage.

The Filharmonic’s work on television and the big screen didn’t stop with “The Sing-Off,” as the group was selected to be part of the cast for the movie “Pitch Perfect 2.”

Producers of “The Sing-Off,” Elizabeth Banks and Max Handelman, who were also the producers for both Pitch Perfect movies, reached out to the group when the movie was in search of a talented group to represent the Philippines.

“To be on a movie set with all of these stars was surreal,” Cruz said. “Seeing how professional and down to earth all of them are was incredibly inspiring.”

Other major artists the group has been fortunate to share the stage with include Pentatonix, Linkin Park and the Black Eyed Peas.

- See “Voice” page 9

1ST AMENDMENT FESTIVAL

Graphic by Tami Sawyer

SPEECH RELIGION PETITION PRESS ASSEMBLY

Celebrating the first five freedoms

Guest speakers, free pizza
in lieu of rights, and more
featured at Central for
First Amendment Festival

By Julia Moreno

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Editors note: Cynthia Mitchell, the organizer of the event, is the adviser of the Observer.

When Cynthia Mitchell, associate professor of journalism, first read in a survey that most students don’t understand the First Amendment, she wanted to scream.

“I thought to myself, ‘You’ve got to be kidding.’ How can I teach the next generation of journalists if they’re going to be working in a culture that doesn’t even understand and support its freedoms?”

she said.

So she decided to do something about it. The result was the first First Amendment Festival at Central, which she created in the 2006-2007 school year.

That initial effort was a yearlong dialogue with 17 events that shined a light on the First Amendment. It included a series of speakers who talked about some of the most cherished rights for Americans.

However, while the event was beneficial to students and faculty on campus, Mitchell said it was not sustainable to do a year very often.

So, after taking a several-year hiatus from coordinating such an ambitious endeavor, Mitchell decided to bring it back as a more manageable, week-long festival in 2013.

That year, Mitchell brought in Glenn Greenwald, the journalist best known

for reporting the mass surveillance leaks of Edward Snowden. In 2014, the festival featured Mary Beth Tinker, who was only 13 years old when she was expelled from school in 1965 after exercising her First Amendment rights by wearing a black armband to protest the Vietnam War.

Last year, Mitchell and another Central professor, Jay Ball, collaborated on a performance about Rachel Corrie, a young woman from Evergreen College who was killed during a protest of the destruction of a Palestinian home in the Gaza Strip.

“It was incredibly moving,” Mitchell said. “Cindy and Craig Corrie have done incredible work to promote social justice in the wake of their tragic loss.”

- See “First” page 6

Central softball wins GNAC tournament, headed west to regional

Mitchell Johnson

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There have been 14 GNAC conference tournaments since the conference’s inception during the 2001-2002 school year, and in order to win the conference tournament title, the Wildcats had to make history.

Five days after celebrating their third regular-season conference title in six seasons, Central was staring into the face of

being eliminated after its 2-0 loss to Saint Martin’s University.

No team has ever won the double-elimination GNAC Tournament after losing its first game.

“We hit that pitcher pretty well here, but couldn’t get it done there,” said first basemen Kailyn Campbell.

In order to guarantee an automatic berth into the NCAA Tournament, the Wildcats would have to win four games in a row.

“What I told them was, ‘If there’s anybody that could come back and win this thing, we can,’” said head coach Mike Larabee.

The Wildcats’ mindset was taking the games one at a time, and not worrying about how many games they would have to consecutively win in the GNAC tournament.

- See “Softball” page 12

A record year

Overall record: 38-14

Conference record: 18-10

Batting average: .342

Stolen bases: 102

Team ERA: 2.90

Fielding percentage: .968

THE EVERGREEN SCENE

No vadin’ way

Kittitas County toys with idea of ban on vaping



Photo Illustration by: Brittany Allen/The Observer

The proposed ban would prohibit stores from selling vape products to anyone under the age of 18 and prohibit minors from entering dedicated vape shops.

By Brian Cook
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Since December of last year, the Kittitas County Public Health Department has been working on a law that will ban electronic cigarettes in any public place, excluding dedicated vape shops. This ordinance would follow a recent state law which has banned electronic cigarettes on all government property, hospitals and bus stops.

“Vaping” is the term for inhaling and exhaling vapors produced by an electronic cigarette. Abid Daghlawi, owner of One Love Glass and Vape said that a traditional e-cig is loaded with a flavored juice made of vegetable glycerin with the option of adding nicotine. These are seen as a clean alternative to a traditional cigarette, which is loaded with tar, tobacco and hydrogen cyanide.

Proposed Vaping Ban

The ban would prohibit using electronic cigarettes in public places, however it would still allow the use of e-cigarettes in vape stores.

“What I like about vape pens is they’re a convenient alternative to cigarettes,” said Brian Brown, junior philosophy and cyber security major. Vaping, however, is not exclusive to those who have nicotine cravings. Many vapes come with detachable rigs, which allow the user to burn marijuana flower and oils. However, smoking marijuana in public is illegal under Washington state

law, though one can smoke on private property. Daghlawi said that a large portion of the college students who come into his store purchase more vape pens to burn e-juice than vape pens designed to burn marijuana. “I have no problem when it comes to people vaping on campus,” Brown said. “I have more of a problem with people smoking cigarettes.” Tayler Cool, junior information technology and administrative management major, believes that most vape users are vaping to quit smoking or to get their fix of nicotine. Since nicotine is an additive to the juices purchased for e-cigs, many smokers vape to wean themselves off their nicotine cravings. “I believe vaping is the best anti-smoking campaign there is,” Cool said. “Cigarettes make everything smell like shit!”



Observation

Deck

On Sunday, a friend and I attended the Kittitas County Democratic Convention in Thorp (of all places) at its high school. Did you know Thorp was big enough to have a high school? I thought it was just a fruit stand. We didn’t attend by choice – we were delegates, bestowed with the awesome democratic duty to represent our districts at a county-wide convention in support of our chosen representative. In reality, we had to select delegates for a state convention, and decide on some policies that we liked. That’s about it. We were told through a text message telling us to be there by noon to register. On the website that closely matched what we had to go to—it told us to be there by 11 a.m. So I did what any rational person would do, and showed up at noon. And as it turns out, I was early. So early in fact the organizers were not prepared and I ended up being one of the first people to register for the event. But the convention didn’t start until 1 p.m. (can you imagine if I showed up at 11 a.m.?) and upon reading the official schedule, my friend and I were amazed to see that we would have to be there until at least 3 p.m. Are you kidding me? There, we sat in a sweaty, over-filled auditorium the size of a doctor’s office waiting room on bleacher seats that must have been designed for Satan’s asshole. We listened to person after person spout information that could have easily been emailed to us, or at least handed out as a pamphlet or something. We both left the first chance we could. Now, I just want to say, I’m not proud of that. I’ve been a Democrat for as long as I can remember, and I’d do just about some things

for the Democratic party, but this was just ridiculous. And I didn’t even want to be a delegate. My voting district table had about eight people, and after exchanging awkward glances with everyone, it was pretty clear to me that I would have to don the delegate hat. (My alternate was a Hillary Clinton supporter, so if I didn’t go, she would have to go in support of Bernie Sanders. Poor girl). One of the older gentlemen even told me that there was no way he could attend any of the conventions, which perplexed me because he was retired. Oh well. So I delegated myself and here I am. And I went. But I didn’t stay because I wasn’t prepared for the absolute cluster I ran into on Sunday. I’m not sure if anyone could be. So why is this important? Because it’s topical, that’s why. Washington is about 20 days away from casting their vote for who they think should represent the Republican party (not that it matters, after Ted Cruz dropped out of the race on Tuesday). And for a brief second, I considered becoming a Republican. I’m kidding. But seriously, something about caucuses needs to change. I vote not having them at all. They’re a complete waste of time, and for everyone that has never attended one before (A.K.A. a large percentage of Bernie Sanders supporters) they’re confusing as all hell. Primaries work fine, let’s do those. Or at the very least, let’s try harder to organize a concise convention? I don’t mean to speak ill of the people who organized this—they were all very nice and cordial – but they’d surely share my sentiment. In other words, being a Democrat sucks sometimes.

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NEWS

EDITOR: JULIA MORENO | news@cwuobserver.com

Celebrate Central's traditions this summer

By Joey Castonguay

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This year, Central wants to take its traditions to a whole new level as part of its 125-year anniversary celebration.

The incoming freshman class will be part of a new tradition next fall, as Central plans to implement a traditions book as a way for students to get the entire college experience in Ellensburg.

"In the letter from the president, you really get the feeling it is an invitation of engagement and for people to be a part of something bigger than themselves," said Jenna Hyatt, director of residence life & new student programs.

The book will be handed out to freshmen during orientation weekend, and will be available for purchase in the Wildcat Shop for students and alumni.

The book will have 91 traditions, signifying the year the school opened in 1891. Traditions range from working and living on campus to walking around People's Pond.

"It's a lot about front-loading the history of the institution," said Robert Ford,



Courtesy of Alumni and Constituent Relations

Incoming freshmen can participate in working towards completing the 91 traditions for Central. You can earn a medallion.

senior director of alumni and constituent relations.

Even lost traditions such as "Sweezy Day," which according to the archives committee was "one of the campus traditions to emerge following World War II," will be brought back. According to the traditions book, President Brooks vetoed Sweezy Day in the 1970s because it turned from a whole-

some campus holiday to a day of binge drinking.

Completing 72 out of the 91 traditions means becoming a Central "traditions keeper" and earning a medallion to wear during the graduation ceremony.

"It is a visual representation. When you start piecing this together in your student

experience, as you see different monuments that are identified historically, it really gives you a sense of place," Ford said.

According to Ford, ASCWU and Services and Activities raised enough money to cover the cost of 10,000 books to be printed, with the Alumni Association being responsible for covering the cost of design.

Central Traditions

- Wellington's Wildfire
- Take a picture with the wildcat statue
- Mr. & Mrs. Central
- Wildcat Cup
- Movers & Shakers
- Zombie Zone/Haunting at Central
- Picture with Wellington
- Students Appreciation Day BBQ
- Volunteer with a Club/Organization
- Family Weekend
- Participate in Orientation
- Visit the Japanese Garden
- Work on Campus
- Live on Campus

A seat for a student, a bed for the homeless

All of the mismatched furniture in 1891 Bistro goes to help buy mattresses for the needy

By Kailan Manandic

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The mismatched furniture in the 1891 Bistro recently helped provide mattresses for those in need through a charity organization designed for displaced families

NW Furniture Bank (NFWB), based in Tacoma, is a charity organization aimed to help unstable or displaced families.

NFWB is a "food bank for furniture," according to Jim Matheny, catering manager for Central Catering. They recycle donated furniture, which would otherwise end up in a landfill or sold at a loss, and give

it to those in need.

Hope Furnishings is the retail department of NFWB, and sells the better-kept furniture at a discount, which directly provides revenue to NFWB for mattresses.

According to Matheny, a set of six maple dining chairs cost Central \$299, which is normally the cost of a single chair.

The mismatched furniture in 1891 cost a total of about \$12,000, said Patrick Stanton, director of auxiliary accounting at Central.

According to Hope Furnishings, every \$100 of furniture purchased provides a twin-size bed for NFWB.

Additionally, Central possibly saved around \$30,000 through Hope Furnishings, Stanton said. Central would have bought "bulletproof" furniture that would've lasted longer but not have fit the space.

"This stuff is cheaper, so if coffee is spilt on it or it's broken, we get rid of it and get new ones," Stanton said. "The furniture keeps changing, so you might walk in and see something new. It makes it seem like a living room."

Industrial furniture is what Central normally uses for spaces, but it wouldn't have worked with the atmosphere, according to Matheny. The aim was for students to not feel scared to put their feet on the tables.

"We didn't want to come



McKenzie Lakey/The Observer

The Bistro was modeled after Portland or Seattle coffee shops. The furniture is meant to not match to make it feel more like home.

in here with brand new furniture where people wouldn't feel comfortable or afraid to spill something," Matheny said. "As the operator, if a table breaks I'm not beat up about it, we'll just replace it."

Originally Wellington's Cafe, 1891 Bistro became what it is because of student surveys. The results showed that students wanted a coffee house-type space on campus.

"That's how it should be," Stanton said, "If the students come and say 'X', we will do that."

Additionally, a stu-

dent committee was formed to help design 1891, which lead to Hope Furnishings.

The committee said the Bistro should feel like a Seattle or Portland coffee shop, and that furniture too "matchy-matchy is bad," Stanton said.

"They said if all the furniture is new and matches, it feels like we're at the airport," Stanton said, "or a dentist's office waiting room."

Hope Furnishings provides a large variety of furniture and, according to Matheny, Central purchased nearly half of its showroom at the time.

There is leftover furniture in a warehouse, ready to replace any broken furniture.

Additionally, 1891 Bistro may see improvements in the future. There are more wifi routers in the Bistro than anywhere else, Stanton said, more power outlets will be added in the future.

"There are improvements still to come as we get our feedback and the common thread has been more outlets," Matheny said. "It'll have to be a grassroots effort from the student body to make that happen."

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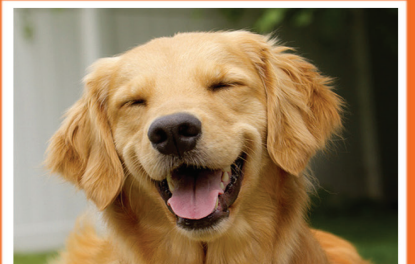
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NEWS

EDITOR: JULIA MORENO | news@cwuobserver.com

Meals on wheels: Visit Central’s newest food truck



Brittany Allen/The Observer

The truck offers enticing options for students and it usually has different food than the other truck that was introduced in the Fall. The truck can be found right next to the 1891 Bistro.

By Joey Castonguay
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Central dining services has added a new food truck for students that is located throughout campus, primarily outside of 1891 Bistro. The truck comes as the second purchase made by Central’s dining services.

“This is really an extension, a continuing evolution, of our attempt to try to create variety and choices for the students,” said Joel Klucking, vice president for business and financial affairs. This process started last spring with student interviews, Klucking said. “We always envisioned

having two to begin with,” Klucking said. According to Klucking, after hearing the students and witnessing the unexpected success of the first food trailer, Central’s dining services began searching for a full-fledged food truck. Jim Matheny, manager of operations for Central’s dining services, said the truck will

not follow one specific theme, but will rather be left up to the chef to decide the menu that particular day. “As long as it is creative, and as long as the student body is interested, then I think we are heading in the right direction,” Matheny said. May 2 will be the first week

of scheduled operation for the truck; it will be stationed outside of 1891 Bistro. The week of May 9 the truck will be parked north of the Language and Literature building. At this point in time, Klucking said they can “commit to a third vehicle.” Whether it will be a truck or trailer is still unknown.

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Central transit tax passes easily

By Observer Staff

The Central Transit sales tax was approved on April 26, which will implement two-tenths of 1 percent sales tax that will help fund Central Transit for the next 10 years.

Proposition 1 needed a simple majority vote, which allowed the tax to fund transit, according to the Daily Record.

Of the votes counted, 62.56 percent voted yes and 37.44 voted no for the tax. A total of 2,214 ballots were counted and the election will be certified on May 6.

Voter turnout was 29.3 percent on April 26, according to the Daily Record.

Bruce Tabb, city council member said to the Daily Record that he thinks it's amazing voter turnout was so high.

"It's just incredibly exciting I think for this community," Tabb said to the Daily Record after hearing the results.

After the election, the City of Ellensburg will set the rate, which can be up to two-tenths of 1 percent of the sales tax. Currently the sales tax is 8 percent and the change will take it to 8.2 percent when implemented. The City of Ellensburg must notify the state of the change.

Additionally, night and weekend bus services will be offered from the extra money funded by the tax. There will also be a paratransit service called Dial-A-Ride on weeknights and weekends. A bus service route for West Ellensburg will be added and add more stops in Ellensburg for the Yakima-Ellensburg Commuter bus.

The Kittitas Valley Fire and Rescue will be relieved of its

services of cabulance transportation.

According to the Daily Record, the city will also become eligible for WSDOT funding to help pay for the additional services that will be added.

City staff estimates that the tax will generate approximately \$791,800 in 2017. In 2015, Central Transit expenses were \$335,601.

"First" from page 1

This year, Mitchell is collaborating with the year of dialogue on mass incarceration. She's also working with an event planning class to put on the events in the festival.

Normally, Mitchell and an intern will work together throughout winter and spring quarters to put on the four-day festival in May. All of the events are held in the Student Union and Recreation Building.

Travis Isaman, a senior public relations major and event coordinator for the festival, said this is his first time working at the event, but he has participated for the last three years.

"To me, the First Amendment is one of the most important aspects of American culture that often gets overlooked," he said. "Though many people are afraid of getting stripped of these rights, many people are not even aware of what the First Amendment fully entails."

He added that he's most excited for the "Make Your Own Protest Sign" stations that will be set up from Monday to Thursday on both of the SURC patios.

"It is awesome to see all of the students who take part, marching around campus with a sign that allows them to flex their First Amendment rights," he said.

Additionally, students can participate by leaving messages

on the free speech walls on the East and West SURC patios. Students can write whatever they want on the walls, which will be up throughout the entire festival, according to Mitchell.

On Monday and Tuesday, the SURC Pit will be the site of a series of debates. Students can pick a side regarding the recent legalization of marijuana in Washington, and say what's on

of information or democracy couldn't work. Any kind of a free-market society can't work if there are controls on the flow of information."

On Thursday, students can give up their First Amendment rights for a piece of free pizza at 'Food For Thought' on the SURC East Patio.

"People don't know what to expect, but they find out pretty quickly that you can't sit with your friends because that's freedom of assembly," Mitchell said with a smile. "We have a complaint box and a complaints table, but nobody staffs it and you can't put anything in it because that's freedom of petition."

Mitchell said around a dozen students dress up in all black and carry billy clubs to act as enforcers.

Additionally, students dressed in religious garb or acting as journalists will be hauled away by the enforcers to demonstrate what would happen if the First Amendment was taken away.

For the latter, Mitchell herself gets involved by taking on the role of a protester, which gets her hauled off by the enforcers.

"Even though I've done this how many times, and I plan it," she said, "it still really pisses me off at a real gut level when they try to drag me away, like 'No! That's my right!'"

I thought to myself, 'You've got to be kidding!' How can I teach the next generation of journalists if they're going to be working in a culture that doesn't even understand and support its freedoms?"

-Cynthia Mitchell, Professor of Journalism

their minds regarding the upcoming presidential election.

On Wednesday, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Douglas Blackmon will be the festival's keynote speaker. His book, "Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II," highlights the injustices against and persistent enslavement of African Americans from 1865 into the 20th century.

"It's fundamental to American democracy. Democracy can't work without it [The First Amendment]. That's one thing the founding fathers were completely right about," Blackmon said. "They absolutely understood it had to be a wide open, independent, exchange

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Doug Blackmon to come to Central

By Julia Moreno
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Next Wednesday, Douglas Blackmon, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, will speak at the First Amendment Festival about his work on the "neo-slavery" of African Americans from 1865 to the 20th century. Blackmon will also be the final keynote speaker for the year-long dialogue on mass incarceration.

The 52-year-old Mississippi native said he has been a journalist since the age of 12 and started working regularly for newspapers at the age of 15. He graduated from Hendrix College in Arkansas.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, he worked on several news stories for The Wall Street Journal on institutional racism and the practice of forced labor of African Americans by businesses in the South.

"If you asked yourself, 'Why was it so many terrible practices around race continued for so long after they were no longer required by law?'" he said, "the part of that discussion that had never been had was the role of business in all of it."

These stories later on became the inspiration for his book, "Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II."



Courtesy of Douglas Blackmon's Twitter

The book was also transformed into a PBS documentary where Blackmon had a role as the co-executive producer.

Blackmon is also the host and executive producer for "American Forum," which has been on the air for the past four years and he is a contributing writer for The Washington Post.

"It's sort of a Charlie Rose-style interview show between me and a scholar or a presidential candidate or a leading intellectual of some sort," he said.

His plans include a new book and film that focus on the failure of public school integration in America. Both of those will come out in 2017.



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OPINION

EDITOR: JONATHAN GLOVER | editor@cwuobserver.com

Graduation? A job? This adult thing is hard



By Shanai Bemis
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I'm about to graduate, and I'm terrified.

For the first time in my life, I'm not going to have 'the next step' waiting for me. After elementary school comes middle school, and then high school and then university and then... the rest of your life?

I'm not sure I'm ready for that. Once you graduate, you're supposed to be an adult who can live on your own and pay bills and make good choices.

I just ate Doritos for dinner because I haven't gone grocery shopping in a week.

You can see where my problem is.

Beyond that, there's the daunting task of actually making enough money to pay said bills.

Just picking a major was hard enough, now I'm expected to pick what I want to do for the rest of my life, plus it has to ac-

tually pay well enough for me to live off of it?

Excuse me while I have a minor panic attack.

People keep asking me if I have a job lined up. I keep smiling and telling them, "Oh, I have a few options I'm considering."

It's not like I don't have options either. I have been offered a job and I'm sure that if I tried (which I haven't), I could find a job in my field.

But neither of those options are the job I want. Hell, I don't even know what the job I want is. I want to go out and do things, and see people and be young.

All I do know is that working 40 hours a week with a job I don't love is definitely not what I want.

I'm scared and confused... but I'm not alone.

If you Google "college students scared to graduate," there are literally millions of webpages talking about students scared of life after college. Most of those pages are articles or blogs written by students who are going through the same thing. Some of them are even people who have come out the other



Got Credit/ Flickr

side and are doing great at this 'being an adult' thing.

I was talking to my dad on the phone the other day, and he kept telling me that being scared of graduating is natural, that everyone goes through it.

It's hard to remember that sometimes — especially when everyone you know can't wait to graduate and do great things with their lives.

It's hard to remember that

your friend with the awesome job lined up is terrified she's going to mess it all up on her first day.

Or that your friend, who seems so calm and cool when he talks about living in L.A. to make independent films, is internally freaking out about the cost of living.

Finding your groove for the next stage of life is hard. Being a freshman in high school wasn't

Tweets from the streets

Mariah Rocker @MostlyMariah · 2h

I spotted Burgfoot! Now I just hope I win some Sasquatch tickets 🤔

#FindYourSquatch @CWU_Advertising @881TheBurgKCWU

Boo @breiannasuarus · 5h

Visiting CWU with 50+ children was crazy, but adorable.

Ryan Kuhn @RSKuhn · 5h

CWU softball received a No. 2 seed in the NCAA Tournament and will face No. 7 Dixie State in a first round game on Thursday. #NCAA #GNACsb

Taylor @TaylorSimental · 8h

Trying to win SASQUATCH tickets? Follow @CWU_Advertising and keep updated on the 13 pairs we're giving away THIS WEEK!

Tweet us @cwuobserver

What's your major? IDGAF



By Zac Hereth
sports@cwuobserver.com | @ZacHereth

This past weekend, just like any other, I was at the bar with a couple of my friends, blowing off some steam after another long week of jumping through hoops as I prepare to graduate.

I was enjoying myself and doing my normal thing, until I was approached by a complete stranger. This stranger assumed I was a bio-medicine major, because one of my two friends I was with that night is in that major. Apparently, this guy knew him because he is a part of one the majors in the College of the Sciences, too.

So when he asked me if I was in the major, I replied, "No. I'm a journalism major."

My reply generated a small scoff and a smug smirk across his face. I could feel the, "I'm smarter than you because I'm a science major," from a mile away.

I went on to say that I was the sports editor of the school paper and tried to keep the conversation friendly.

His response was that he had never heard of the school paper, and interestingly enough, he went on to say he is on a show on 88.1 The 'Burg.

I didn't ask him what the show was, because frankly I

already didn't give a flying four-letter f-word about who this guy was or what he does. But I did think to myself, "How does this guy not know about the other student media outlets on campus when he works for one of them?"

I mean, I might not see every episode of Central News Watch, read every story in Pulse or like every show I hear on The 'Burg, but I give them all a shot and try to support my peers as they reach for their goals, just like I'm doing with my job here at the Observer.

I don't think I'm better than broadcast journalism majors, even if I can write better, because I know they'd sure as hell make me look like a babbling idiot who occasionally stutters and starts every sentence with "umm" if I was on the air.

As a matter of fact, I don't think I'm better than students from any major. We all have our strengths. We all have our weaknesses. We all have our different dreams we are chasing.

People assume that students in the communication department can't do math—I can. But I sure as hell know I don't want a job that requires me to do advanced math all my life. That sounds about as appealing as walking barefoot over glass

that's covered in salt and lemon juice.

But back to this guy. He didn't stop there. He went on to say how he didn't find value in a major that just teaches you how to write, and he didn't see writing as a way to bring the money home.

Newsflash bro: We do more than write. As a matter of fact, I'm sure I could tell you more about the First Amendment, how to sift through public records to see if my government is doing its job and do something that is just as important as anything in this world—communicate—than you ever could.

That last part was pretty apparent when you made yourself look like a complete jackass when we met.

I'm sure you could tell me more about the periodic table than I'd ever want to know. I respect that. Science majors have to learn some tough shit, and I see one of my roommates deal with those hard assignments every night.

But before you think that being in a "tougher" major makes you better or smarter, maybe you should realize what you lack. Sometimes it's pretty apparent once you open your mouth.

I don't think I'm better than students in any major. We all have our strengths. We all have our weaknesses. We all have our different dreams we are chasing.

Comics all around

Stop by Central City Comics this Saturday to pick up a free comic in honor of Free Comic Book Day.



Central City Comics store owner Gus Foster (right) helps a customer from out of town find the right comic for them.

By Sarah Hoot
hoots@cwu.edu

Ever since 2002, the first Saturday of May is the day where comic book lovers of all ages can get their hands on a selection of their favorite prints. Each year a special new issue is released to the fans and according to the Free Comic Book Day Facebook page, the spotlight issue for this year is Marvel's Civil War.

Even Ellensburg is participating in this national event. Gus Foster, owner of Central City Comics, and his sidekick, a pug called Modok, have been the city's heroes when it comes to comic books.

Foster began participating in Free Comic Book Day 12 years ago and since then he has transformed his store into a mini convention.

"We have artists and writers from Seattle that have published comic books come over here and set up in the back of the store like an artists' alley," Foster said. "We have got some guys that have done cover art for Grimm's Fairy Tales and self-published artists and writers, so it will be a lot of fun."

The celebrity guest list includes: Grimm's Fairy Tale artist Jason Metcalf and Randy Kintz, another artist whose origin story began in Portland, Oregon. The two of them will be doing free sketches for the kids that come into the shop, as well as selling some of their works to Central City's older patrons.

Along with the free comics, there will be other deals throughout the store.

"A lot of back issues will



Arber Demiri/The Observer

be on sale for a dollar a piece, which is a considerable discount because a lot of stuff is four bucks," Foster said. "If you buy comics on a regular basis you know they are not cheap."

Foster will also be selling some of his large variety of vinyl POP figurines that will be discounted down to around \$ 10. There will also be several raffles going on throughout the day, with prizes being select toys and comics.

According to Foster, visitors to the store can bring in a canned or fresh food donation to get their names entered into the raffle for each item they bring in.

All proceeds of the raffle will be going to the FISH Food Bank. In previous years, the store collected around 600 pounds of food from just one day's raffle.

"What's great is the Farmers Market is going to be going on so I am assuming, I am hoping, that what we will do is get a lot of fresh produce," Foster said. "People will bring in a bundle of spinach and they will get a

Comic book day

When: Saturday May 7
Where: Central City Comics and Nerdcore
Time: Noon–7 p.m.

raffle ticket, you bring in a sack of potatoes and you get a couple of raffle tickets."

Central City Comics is not the only store in Ellensburg that will be hosting Free Comic Book Day. Downtown's newest gaming store, Nerdcore, will be handing out free comics as well. According to Denise Shaw, associate professor of educational foundations and curriculum and co-owner of Nerdcore, the store will have cosplayers from Yakima's Central City Comicon and a shaved ice food truck out front.

There will be about 50 comics on the list for this year according to Foster. The full list is available at freecomicbookday.com.



Test out games galore at the Power of Play convention

By Maria Harr
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@MiaTheGeek

The Seattle indie game developer scene is strong, especially on Friday, May 20, and Saturday, May 21, at the Power of Play convention.

Power of Play is an intimate game industry convention, boasting tons of industry professionals and the room to meet and learn from them all.

It's a small convention, but according to their website, this year they'll have over 500 industry pros, more than 20 panels and 40 plus speakers at the Meydenbauer Center in Bellevue.

On Friday, day one, the attendees are limited to those in the industry—up and coming indie developers, game veterans, informative sessions and an industry after-party at the end of the day.

The general public can attend on Saturday to experience Power of Play's own indie game expo, find out the results of the Seattle Indie Game Competition. They can also try retro games in the free play room and even participate in one of three Esport competitions.

As I experienced last year, volunteering on Saturday, the convention has a laidback atmosphere that was relaxing, and completely different than most of the larger conventions you'll attend elsewhere.

The small ratio of attendees versus industry professionals meant there was always someone in the industry available to speak with, whether about the game they're currently developing, their creative process or just to get to know them.

The indie expo was especially revealing. While PAX may have more games to test out, you'll never have the same amount of time to analyze and test out indie titles at a larger convention than you'll have at Power of Play.

It really gives fans, and those interested in joining the industry themselves, a quiet place to have real conversations and connections with the industry.

While most students will likely not be attending the industry only day on Friday, I can't real-

Convention

When: May 20 and 21
Where: Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue
Price: \$30 Saturday only
Friday closed to public

ly say they're missing out, because Saturday has some really great and informative sessions and panels.

They included ones on streaming technology, audio in indie games, narrative storytelling, how to capitalize on Esports and even postmortems on successful games such as Ark: Survival Evolved and Alphabear.

It's immensely fun to cruise through the aisles in the indie expo and speak with creators. During my volunteer breaks, I would go to any table that caught my eye and could easily either try the game they were showing or start up a conversation—or both!

Power of Play gives something of a behind the scenes view of the games we nerds love (or have yet to fall in love with—so many new indie games!).

This view is fairly rare to see, especially without having special access or just extremely good luck at a larger convention.

“It really gives fans, and those interested in joining the industry themselves, a quiet place to have real conversations and connections.”

I highly recommend attending if you're interested in joining the industry in any capacity, or even if you're just a big fan

that enjoys learning about the creation of games.

The Esports tournaments will be for Halo 5, Rocket League and Tumblestone. Joining the tournaments requires registration beforehand on the Power of Play website.

For more on the events, a schedule and roster of who's who at the indie expo, go to Power of Play's website at <http://powerofplay.us/>

For something sooner Brian Schmidt, the founder of Game-SoundCon, a convention dedicated to game audio, will be speaking at Central on May 18.

Schmidt will speak with a focus on music in the video game industry in the Music Building at 5 p.m.



SCENE

EDITOR: VICTORIA SHAMRELL | scene@cwuobserver.com

Singing out around the nation

“Voice” from page 1

“Each performance has been unforgettable. It’s cool seeing how each band or musician operates.” Cruz said.

According to Cruz, being around other groups, singers and judges has helped them hone and better refine their sound.

As an a capella group, each group member’s sound is just as important as the next, and one of the most key sounds of the group is that of beat boxer Niko Del Rey.

“I’ve been beat boxing since about 2009,” Del Rey said. “But I started taking it more seriously and started practicing harder when we competed on “The Sing-Off” in 2013.”

Del Rey said the hardest part about being the group’s lone beatboxer is trying to sound like a full drum or electronic dance music (EDM) beat by himself.

“If we have to be a guitar or piano as a group, the background parts can take different parts to fill it out,” Del Rey said.

“If I wanted to do kick drums and snares, with effects in the background, all at the same time, I need to find a way to cheat it so it sounds like I’m doing all three at the same time, even though that may not be physically

Performance

When: Friday May 6
Where: SURC Ballroom
Time: 8 p.m.
Tickets: \$3 CWU Students
\$7 General Admission

possible. I mean, a drummer gets to use all his limbs and I only get to use my mouth.”

It’s been a long, grueling trip for the group. Whether it is time spent on a plane or traveling on the road—the tour has certainly taken a toll on the group’s health.

“The lack of sleep from waking up early to catch our flights really strains us physically and mentally,” Del Rey said.

But as much as the tour is taking a toll on them, the group loves having the opportunity to spread their music.

“They are always in rehearsal and very dedicated to their craft,” said Lauren Klug, the group’s personal public relations specialist.

“They love what they do and they are very supportive to the people that come out to see them.”

Just as Klug said, the group is very much invested in what they



Photo courtesy of CWU Publicity Center

Filharmonic, an a capella group that was featured on The Sing-Off and was in Pitch Perfect 2, will be here at Central this Friday.

do, and no matter how hard the trials and tribulations of what a tour may bring, the group still manages to find a way to put a great product on the table.

As the The Filharmonic’s close out the last 11 cities of their tour, they will be at Central this Friday, May 6 as part of Central’s Family Weekend.

It’s going to be a great show. Don’t miss out on this performance, which blends serenading sounds and head-bobbing beat boxes.





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Creative hands on spinning wheels

By Jacob Hollingsworth
Hollingsworthj@cwu.edu

Central offers many unique and diverse clubs for anyone who's willing to spend an hour of their time and meet new people. The Clay Club meets every Monday this quarter at 3:30 p.m. in Randall Hall's painting studio.

"Clay Club offers an experience outside of the classroom for students to bond and create friends with similar interests. For students who want to play with the [clay] and get a sense of how responsive it is, it's a great opportunity for non art majors," said the club's adviser, Stephen

Robison, an associate professor of art here at Central.

At Clay Club, students try their hand at throwing clay on a pottery wheel. It's a chance for ceramic students to practice outside of class to improve their throwing technique. Clay Club not only practices throwing ceramics on the wheel, they also sell bowls, cups and other objects they make as a fundraiser, Robison said.

"The fundraisers have

Clay Club

When: Every Monday

Where: Randall Hall
painting studio

Time: 3:30 p.m.

helped them go on field trips to Portland and Seattle to experience museums and ceramic exhibitions. The Clay Club has attended several openings at galleries in both cities. They have also raised money to go to the National Conferences," Robison said. "The fundraising events have also helped them bring in several visiting artists

in ceramics. They are planning on having a Mother's Day sale coming up."

Networking is not easy for many people on campus. However, the Clay Club

helps students network and gain entrepreneurial knowledge.

The president of the club and art major, Carita Murphy, enjoys being a part of a hobby that entices people to find their creative qualities, open up more and share their artistic values with each other.

"We're trying to get people together to just make work,

"We're trying to get people together to just make work, and sell the work, and raise money for visiting artists."

-Carita Murphy, Art Major



Charles Harding/The Observer

One member starts the process of throwing a bowl on the pottery wheel. Once the clay bowl is dry it will be baked in the kiln.

and sell the work, and raise money for visiting artists," Murphy said.

Everyone is aware of how difficult it is for aspiring artists to gain considerable attention

from their work, and Central's Clay Club does a fine job at exposing student's work to doors that can open up to opportunities for the creators.

"It's our goal to kind of have

the artists take home some of the money because they made the work, and just how to price their work, and I don't know, trying to sell work as an artist is rough," Murphy said.

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SCENE

EDITOR: VICTORIA SHAMRELL | scene@cwuobserver.com

OBSERVER HEALTH



Ask Dr. H

Dear Dr. H,
Is being gay a choice that you make, or are you born that way?

Dear anonymous,

Another great question – something I'm sure many people wonder and just aren't quite sure how or who to ask! In the past, there's been much debate on the topic, often when new policies or legislation are proposed to help secure equality for LGBTQ persons.

"It's a choice!" some people argue... "They are born that way!" says the opposition.

Personally, I don't know anyone who would voluntarily opt in for a life potentially marred with stigma and discrimination. So, on that basis alone, I think it's safe to consider sexual orientation – and gender identity – not a choice people make but an innate sense of personal being, just as any other individual characteristic.

But, in our heterosexist society, we tend to think of people who are outside that norm as those who differ due to a choice they make about their sexuality or some other event that happened to cause them to be "different."

Rarely do we think of being heterosexual in those terms: Do straight people choose to be straight? What happened to straight people to make them that way?

Sexual identity is complex – who we are sexually attracted to is just one aspect of that identity. We often cannot explain why we're attracted to the people we are ... we just are, right?

The same goes for sexual orientation – some people are attracted to others of the same sex, different sex, or both.

Often, due to the afore-

mentioned stigma and discrimination of same-sex attraction, people who would otherwise have relationships with persons of the same sex may not be able to out of fear. People come out at all stages in life – some identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual early on, and others have relationships with people of the opposite sex, even marriages, until they feel safe and ready to have the same-sex relationships they really want.

Because of the social stigma against sexual minorities and the complexities of sexual orientation and identification, it is difficult to get accurate data on the LGB population in the U.S.

Some research estimates about four percent of the population identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual ... but, that's just those who identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Some people have sexual relationships with persons of the same sex but don't consider themselves to be LGB because they don't have romantic relationships with persons of the same sex.

Others may be sexually attracted to people of the same sex, but also do not identify as LGB because they don't actually have sex with people of the same sex.

So, when we think of sexual orientation as much more than just "you're either gay or you're not," we can see that romantic and sexual attraction are not conscious choices we make, but rather a reflection of our individual wants and needs, what turns us on and what makes us happy.

Personally, I don't know anyone who would voluntarily opt in for a life potentially marred with stigma and discrimination."

Dr. Jill Hoxmeir is a public health professor at CWU.

Send anonymous public health and sex related questions to askdrh@cwuobserver.com and have them answered here.

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Choosing the right pick at the farmer's market



Alyssa Darby/The Observer

The farmers market is the prime place to find fresh fruits and vegetables that are not widely available on Central's campus.

By Kory Hollingsworth

HollingsworthK@cwu.edu

Downtown Ellensburg will host the weekly Kittitas County Farmer's Market starting this Saturday.

Also known as the Ellensburg Farmers Market, this event will feature a number of booths selling produce and other hand-crafted items.

Many vendors are already hard at work preparing for the new season, including the Anderson Family Farm.

Owner Rick Anderson, talked about his family's plans for the market this year as well as the items they plan to sell. The Andersons sell a line of products made from goat's milk.

"Lotions, body butters, salt scrubs, so it all has to do with body care," Rick Anderson said.

"We've come up with goat milk shave cream, goat milk beard oil, so we're even coming up with a men's line now."

Rick Anderson credits his wife, Kimberlee Anderson, for developing the various skin and healthcare products their farm produces. They first started their family business when their children developed lactose intolerance 20 years ago. As a result, the Andersons switched to goat's milk.

The Andersons have not always been farmers. Before starting their family farm, Rick Anderson worked for Microsoft as a project manager.

"About five years ago, I got laid off of corporate America and we decided, 'Well what could we do?' and so we started the business," Rick Anderson said.

The farm the Andersons operate has been around for 10



Alyssa Darby/The Observer

years, while they have participated in the farmers market for five years. Rick Anderson said his favorite part of the market is

"Meeting our customers and developing relationships over the years," Rick Anderson said. "We really enjoy working together as a family."

According to Anderson, the Farmers Market has a large impact on the local economy.

"It attracts local vendors to sell to a local market... and because Ellensburg is so centrally located, we get a lot of folks from Seattle every week, or Spokane," Rick Anderson said.

Senior psychology major Alex Wollaston works as the assistant manager for the market's operations staff. For college students, finding healthy food and nutrition options can be a difficult task.

"My diet has improved so much from just getting quality food from the market ... learning from the farm to table, and just getting to meet the farmers

and actually knowing where my food is growing from," Wollaston said.

Wollaston said, the market has evolved from past years.

"The best thing, especially this year, is we're starting the EBT: 'double your dollars', so for anybody who has food stamps, they can come in and get 'double your dollars' through funding that's being sponsored through local funding through businesses and through the community," Wollaston said.

Wollaston also said the farmers market has plenty of volunteer options available to students and on-campus organizations. Service duties range from marketing, advertising and public relations.

Wollaston and Anderson both noted the variety of vendors and attractions coming to the market this year.

"There's going to be a section down by Ruby that will have entertainment, a children's booth and an educational section, so there's definitely going to be some opportunities," Wollaston said.

If any students are interested in attending the farmers market, it will be held every Saturday starting May 7 through Oct. 29, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

SPORTS

EDITOR: ZAC HERETH | sports@cwuobserver.com

Baseball

Wildcats claw for GNAC title

By Zac Hereth
Sports@cwuobserver.com | @ZacHereth

This weekend, the Wildcat baseball team has a chance to do something they’ve never done before—win a regular-season GNAC Championship.

If Central can win the regular season title, it will host the conference tournament on May 12 and 13.

“If we go out and play good baseball, other teams are gonna have to step up and rise up to beat us,” said head coach Desi Storey.

Since the GNAC’s inception during the 2001-2002 school year, the Western Oregon University Wolves (26-20 overall, 21-15 GNAC) have dominated the conference. They’ve won the regular season title every year with the exception of last season.

Even though they were dethroned as regular season champs last year, the Wolves came into this season voted as the favorite to win the GNAC in the preseason polls. Central, on the other hand, was picked to finish fourth.

The Wildcats (26-20, 22-14) enter the weekend one-game ahead of Western Oregon and need only a split of the season’s final series to claim a conference championship.

“[This is a] big, important weekend just like last weekend,” said senior outfielder Darren Honeysett. “We have a chance



Jordan Cameron/The Observer

Senior Jake Levin attempts to pickoff the runner at first base during Central’s first series against Western Oregon this season.

to win first place, get regionally ranked and knock off one of our biggest rivals.”

That accomplishment will be easier said than done. Western Oregon swept Central in a four-game series in Ellensburg in early April, outscoring the Wildcats 30-14.

“I think for our guys, it’s an understanding that it’s not so much that they took four from us, [it’s that] we didn’t play that well,” Storey said.

Since that series, the Wildcats have gone 12-6 in GNAC play. That push can be attributed to the continued success of the number one hitting offense in the conference, and help from

a couple guys the team didn’t have available last season.

Sophomore pitcher Mackenzie Gaul is leading the conference with a 2.14 ERA in 54.2 innings pitched and has gone 3-0 since the last time Central played Western Oregon.

Gaul is ready to step up to the challenge of facing the conference’s top pitching staff.

“I love it,” Gaul said. “I love having the game on the line. I’ll take it, I’ll take the ball every time.”

To go along with Gaul, senior pitcher/infielder Jake Levin has done a little bit of everything for the Wildcats. He’s leading the team with six home

runs and is tied with Honeysett for the team lead with 29 RBIs. He also has four wins in 12 appearances on the mound, and two complete games.

Levin is the only player in the GNAC with 100 or more at-bats and 50 or more innings pitched this season.

“This is the first time I’ve ever started as a pitcher. I think I’ve probably got as many innings on the mound [this season] as I have my whole life,” Levin said. “But whatever I can do for the team, every game. Whether it’s on the mound or at the plate, I’m just out there competing no matter what.”

The matchup will be a true battle of strength versus

Tale of the Tape

Central
GNAC Record: 22-14
Batting Average: .314
Runs Scored: 270
Home Runs: 32
ERA: 4.69
Fielding Percentage: .952

Western Oregon
GNAC Record: 21-15
Batting Average: .294
Runs Scored: 282
Home Runs: 33
ERA: 3.78
Fielding Percentage: .973

strength. Central comes into the series leading the GNAC with .314 team batting average and is second in the conference with a 4.69 team ERA.

The Wolves enter the weekend leading the conference with a 3.78 team ERA and are second with a .294 team batting average.

“We don’t need to do anything special,” Storey said. “We just need to play good baseball and not give them extra opportunities.”

Storey plans to go with Gaul, Levin, senior Mitch Yada and junior Justin Adams as his starting pitchers for the series.

Western Oregon will likely counter with Brady Miller, Garrett Alvarez, Darrien Moran and Gary Steindorf.

- See “Baseball” page 15

“Softball” from page 1

Central’s first task was to beat Concordia University, with whom the Wildcats split their four-game season series with.

“The most important game was the very next game we’re gonna play,” Larabee said. “If we can take care of business there, we’ll be playing teams coming off losses.”

Both teams combined for 15 runs on 24 hits. The Wildcats were tied 5-5 going into the fifth but outscored Concordia 4-1 the rest of the game, eliminating them from the tournament.

The Wildcats had to face a familiar foe, Saint Martin’s, in the second game of the day. It was a different result this time for the Wildcats. They won 8-0 behind a three-hit complete game shutout by freshman Kayla Smith.

“I had a pretty confident feeling they weren’t going to be able to come back and shut us down again,” Larabee said.

Even though their goal was winning the GNAC Tournament, Larabee was confident his team could obtain an at-large bid going into the championship game.

The Wildcats had to beat Western Oregon University twice to win a GNAC Tournament Title. The Wolves won 15

of their last 20 coming into the game.

“You gotta go all out, can’t leave anything on the field,” third basemen, Alexa Olague told GNACSports.com after the team’s win over Saint Martin’s.

The Wildcats won both games, while the offense erupted to out score the Wolves 20-5.

The pitching was just as solid for the Wildcats. Smith pitched a two-run, five-hit complete game moving her record to 8-0 overall. Kiana Wood pitched game two and gave up three runs on five hits moving her record to 18-6.

“[Kiana] really wanted the ball and she threw phenomenal,” Larabee said.

At the end of the weekend, the Wildcats eliminated every team that participated.

“I think it’s pretty impressive, that’s something hard to do,” Larabee said. “You’ve got to play more games than everyone else. It really shows the fight in our players playing for something [that’s] never been done before.”

Olague was the MVP of the tournament. She hit .538 with seven RBIs and three runs scored.

“I’m really happy for Alexa,” Larabee said. “Very well deserving. She’s been solid for us.”

On Monday, the 64-team NCAA Tournament field was announced. The Wildcats got

the two-seed in the west. Central was the lone GNAC team in the field. The PacWest had four teams and the California Collegiate Athletic Association had three.

Central opens up against last year’s national championship runner-up Dixie State University on Thursday. In 2014, the Wildcats played the Trail Blazers twice in the West Regional and beat the Wildcats 8-6 and 8-0 in both contests.

“We’re looking to get some revenge on them,” Campbell said.

The Wildcats have a potential rematch against two teams they played this year in the Tournament of Champions.

Central played Azusa Pa-



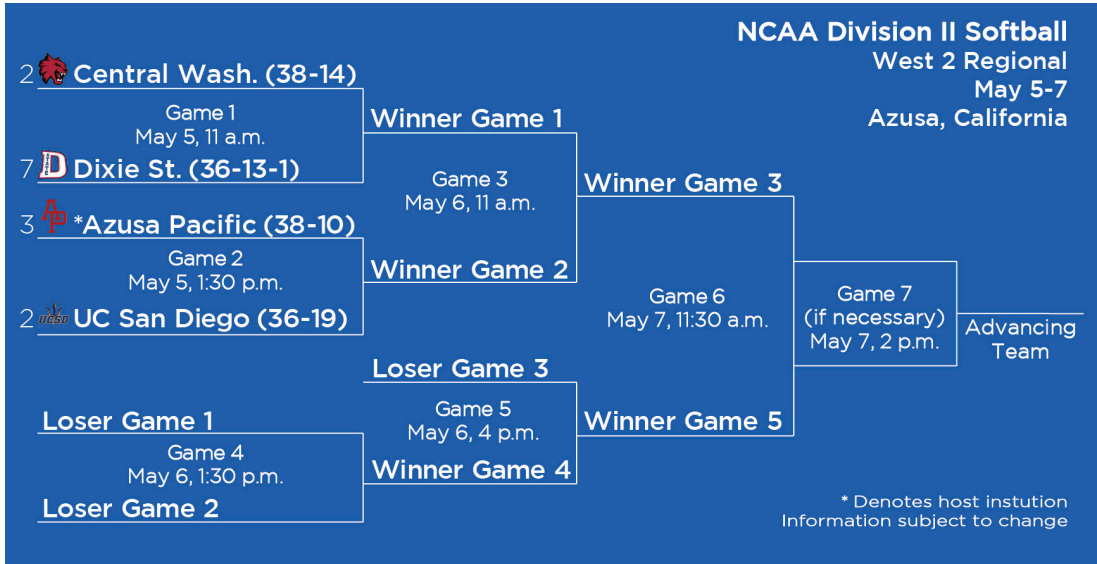
McKenzie Lakey/The Observer

Junior Kailyn Campbell gets her lead off of third base in a game against Saint Martin’s.

cific University and beat them 2-1 in eight innings, and in the final game Central lost 3-1 to the University of California San Diego.

What stands out to Larabee about both teams is they have tough left-handed pitchers.

“We definitely have our work cut out for us,” Larabee said.



SPORTS

EDITOR: ZAC HERETH | sports@cwuobserver.com

Football

Seahawks nailed it with 2016 draft



By Zac Hereth

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I hate to be the guy that jumps on what has already been said, but it's hard not to like what the Seahawks did with their draft class this past weekend.

Whether it was ending up with five picks in the first three rounds, thanks to grabbing an extra pick on day-one of the draft when it traded back in the first round with the Denver Broncos, or trading up in the second round to take a player many valued as a first round talent, the Seahawks seemed to make all the right moves early in the draft.

Beefing up both lines

The Seahawks started their first round in typical fashion; they traded their first round pick, but unlike years past, Seattle stayed in the first round when they swapped picks with Denver.

The move Seattle made allowed the team to acquire a third draft pick for the third round, and take offensive lineman Germain Ifedi at pick number 31. The pick was the

2016 Draft Class

Round 1: OT Germain Ifedi
Round 2: DT Jarran Reed
Round 3: RB C.J. Prosise, TE Nick Vannett, OG Rees Odhiambo
Round 5: DT Quinton Jefferson, RB Alex Collins
Round 6: C Joey Hunt
Round 7: WR Kenny Lawler, RB Zac Brooks

start to filling the team's biggest need this offseason.

The move could've backfired anyone from pick 27 to 30 would've taken Ifedi, which would've left the Seahawks without an offensive lineman to pick that would've had the talent to justify going in the first round.

With the lack of depth on the Seahawks offensive line, Ifedi should be starting week one against the Miami Dolphins, barring injury or a huge flop in the preseason.

Whether he is at left or right tackle, or even at guard, Ifedi will be put to the test week one playing against a defensive line that includes Cameron Wake, Oliver Vernon and Ndamukong Suh.

He could receive help from some other rookies early in the season as well. Seattle spent its last of three third round picks on guard Rees Odhiambo and its sixth round pick on center Joey Hunt.



Glen Johnson/Texas A&M Athletics' Department

Germain Ifedi is the first offensive lineman to be taken by the Seahawks in the first round since James Carpenter in 2011.

Both could compete for starting spots in the preseason, and early word from the Seahawks' camp is they expect Hunt to push Patrick Lewis for the starting spot at center.

The moves to improve the defensive live started by the Seahawks moving up. They traded with the Chicago Bears to jump on the opportunity to take defensive tackle Jarran Reed.

This is the pick that received the most praise from draft analysts. General manager John

Schneider, even came out to say the team was debating between Reed and Ifedi for its first pick.

Just like Ifedi, Reed fills one of the team's biggest needs going into the draft, and he'll likely be playing meaningful snaps in week one.

Reed will need to fill the run-stuffing role on the interior of the defensive line, which was a void created when Brandon Mebane left in free agency.

Seattle went on to try and find a pass rusher for the interior

of its defensive line as well when they took Quinton Jefferson in the fifth round. Jefferson had 6.5 sacks in his senior year at Maryland and should compete with Jordan Hill for some playing time on the defensive line.

Building depth and finding role players

With the first of the team's third round picks, Seattle picked up former wide receiver turned

- See "Draft" page 15

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SPORTS

EDITOR: ZAC HERETH | sports@cwuobserver.com

Soccer

Friendly foes

Soccer Club takes the field in a friendly match against the Saudi Student Association

By Samuel Beaumonte
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With seven new players on Central’s Soccer Club’s roster and just eight weeks of practicing together, the club looks forward to their first friendly match against the Saudi Student Association (SSA) on May 6—a game that’s been years in the making.

“We’ve been waiting to play against them... but we’ve been busy lately,” said Soccer Club President TJ Burford, a forward for the team who joined the club at the start of the year. “From what I’ve heard through the grapevine, they’ve been wanting to play with us for years, and since we have some

free time, we were able to fit a game in.”

Spring quarter is the shortest quarter for the club. It has only six weeks of competitive play, most of which is focused on tournament invites and friendly games.

Originally, the club was going to play against Tri-Cities on May 6 and 7, but that game was pushed forward to April 30 before being cancelled altogether.

“We just got done with a tournament in Pullman playing against [division-I] schools as the only [division II] to compete, and came away with a tie and two losses,” Burford said. “We had only been practicing for three weeks together, which means only six practices, and it takes time to for a team to get used to each other.”

“We’ve been waiting play against them... but we’ve been busy lately. From what I’ve heard through the grapevine, they’ve been wanting to play us for years, and since we have some free time, we were able to fit a game in.”

-TJ Burford, Soccer Club President



Jordan Cameron/The Observer

Freshman Abdul Aldhait (right) will be playing for the Soccer Club. He is also a member of the Saudi Student Association.

Despite the immediate attention the SSA game demands, getting seven new players for the quarter is huge for the club.

“I think that for the situation that we’re in we did well and we could keep it up through spring and into fall with a lot of returning players,” Burford said.

While the club has been running year round, its roster sees many changes throughout the year. Sometimes it’s a loss of members because students get busy with classes and have to take a break, and in some cases they’ll have a much deeper roster because some players have

more free time than in previous quarters or have simply learned of the club for the first time.

“I came in with a large group of people,” said freshman keeper Alex Van Zaylen. “It took me a while to get comfortable, but everyone was inviting and I feel that I synced up pretty well with the defense.”

Another new member to the team is freshman left wing Abdul Aldhait. He is a member of Central’s Soccer Club and the SSA.

“I’ve been part of SSA for two quarters, but I’ll be playing for the club; I really want to

challenge them,” Aldhait said. “There’s multiple players who are excited to play against [Central’s] club. I don’t know why, but it should be a very exciting game. They really want to come and show off their skills here.”

With both teams preparing for a long-awaited game, most players forget (or don’t mind) that it’s a friendly match. With so few opportunities to play in the spring, the club looks forward to any game it can get into.

“There hasn’t been a game we haven’t tried hard to win,” Van Zaylen said. “Even if it’s a friendly we plan to go all out.”



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SPORTS

EDITOR: ZAC HERETH | sports@cwuobserver.com

Baseball

Senior hits his stride in final season

By Ryan Kinker
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Every student athlete wants to end their collegiate career on a high note. For Central baseball player Ryan Atkinson, his entire senior season has become one.

Atkinson, second baseman for the Wildcats, has been a main cog in a successful season for Central, starting in 44 of the 46 games this season.

Among hitters in the GNAC with at least 100 at-bats, Atkinson is second in walks (22,) third in on-base percentage (.462) and first in hits (62), batting average (.387) and runs scored (44.)

“He’s just on fire,” said head coach Desi Storey. “Teams just can’t get him out.”

Atkinson has played organized baseball since he was five, but has been around baseball for much longer.

“It really started before that,” Atkinson said. “My dad played it growing up, and I have an older brother, so I was introduced pretty much as soon as I could walk.”

Atkinson, a 2012 Mount Si High School graduate, was a member of the 2011 WIAA 3A State Championship team.

“I wasn’t the standout or anything,” Atkinson said. “I wasn’t a stud by any means, but I was part of a really great team.”

Members of the Mount Si championship team that Atkinson was a part of are currently playing professional baseball.

2011 graduate Max Brown played outfield at Kansas State University and was drafted in the 2015 by the Arizona Diamondbacks. Fellow 2011 graduate Tim Proudfoot played collegiate baseball at Texas Tech University and was drafted by the Oakland Athletics in both 2014 and 2015. He currently plays for the Beloit Snappers, the single-A minor-league affiliate of Oakland.

After having a great career at Mount Si, Atkinson spent two years at Columbia Basin College in Pasco, Washington, before coming to Central.

“I could’ve played a lot [of] places,” Atkinson said. “But I wanted to play in, basically, my backyard.”



Jordan Cameron/The Observer

Senior Ryan Atkinson’s batting average has jumped from .271 last season to a GNAC best .387 heading into the final weekend of this season.

Atkinson, a business major, has posted career numbers in his last year under Storey. He’s helped the Wildcats stay in the hunt for the GNAC title with a 22-14 record in the GNAC and an overall record of 26-20.

If “he continues the next couple of weeks, he should be in consideration for [GNAC] Player of the Year,” Storey said. “He’s definitely going to be deserving of at least consideration.”

Before playing four games against Northwest Nazarene on April 29 and 30, Central was three games behind Western Oregon for first in the GNAC, with eight games left before the GNAC Championship Tournament. During this final stretch of the regular season, Atkinson cred-

its consistency in game and at practice to getting the Wildcats to their goal of a GNAC regular-season title.

“The results you see on the field are really a reflection of how well [we] practice,” Atkinson said. “Every day you show up to the field with the intention to get better and improve.”

The Wildcats were able to sweep the four-game series against Northwest Nazarene to take over first place in the GNAC. Atkinson helped lead the way with 10 hits in 15 at-bats, five RBIs, five runs scored, two walks and just one strikeout.

This past weekend put the Wildcats in a great position

to capture the top seed for the conference tournament, and an even better chance at getting into the NCAA Division II National Championship Tournament.

Coach Storey knows that getting into the national championship bracket would be an amazing bookend for his seniors, especially Atkinson.

“He’s playing great, and this is a great group of seniors,” Storey said. “At times we haven’t played to our abilities as a team, but these guys have never given up. They go out and compete every weekend.”

Atkinson is becoming more aware of what could lie ahead for the rest of the season, being part of baseball lore here at Central, just as he is ingrained in the legacy of Mount Si.

Baseball “is a game I’ve been playing my whole life and obviously I want to end strong and win games with my team,” Atkinson said. “I don’t want to take anything for granted. I want to leave it all out on the field.”

Improvement in a Season

Junior year

Batting Average: .271
On-Base Percentage: .333
Runs: 11
Hits: 23
Doubles: 4
Home Runs: 3
RBIs: 19
Stolen Bases: 0
Fielding Percentage: .930

Senior Year

Batting Average: .387
On-Base Percentage: .467
Runs: 46
Hits: 65
Doubles: 9
Home Runs: 3
RBIs: 20
Stolen Bases: 10
Fielding Percentage: .965

“If he continues the next couple of weeks, he should be in consideration for [GNAC] Player of the Year. He’s definitely going to be deserving of at least consideration.”

-Desi Storey, Head Coach

“Baseball” from page 12

Miller, Alvarez and Moran have three of the top six ERAs in the conference.

“They’ve got a good staff, don’t get me wrong. Those guys compete,” Storey said. “From our standpoint, we’re the best offensive team in the league. Our guys have done a pretty good job rising to the challenge of whoever’s throwing.”

With the teams pretty evenly matched between pitching and offense, defense may be what this series comes down to.

In the last series, Central committed 10 errors to West-

ern Oregon’s six. The Wolves lead the GNAC in fielding percentage, and the Wildcats are in fifth.

Storey said he told his guys to just focus on eliminating the dumb mistakes.

A Wildcats regular-season championship would give the school its second regular-season sports title this season.

“I think it’d be pretty cool. Obviously Coach Larabee and his staff and the girls have done a great job,” Storey said. “I give them a bad time because I told them we’ve spent all spring trying to keep up with them because they’ve done a pretty good job.”

“Draft” from page 13

running back C.J. Prorise in hopes his receiving skills could help replace Fred Jackson as the team’s third-down back.

Prorise averaged just under 12 yards per catch in his one season at running back while at Notre Dame, showing a skill that neither Thomas Rawls nor Christine Michael has shown much of yet in their career.

Just four picks later, Seattle took tight end Nick Vannett, which may have been the only “meh” pick of the first couple of days of the draft.

In four years at Ohio State, Vannett never averaged two

catches a game, but his forte is supposed to be his ability to block. Some might want to hop on the “he can be the next Zach Miller” bandwagon, but remember that Miller was a much more accomplished receiver coming out of college.

With Luke Willson’s contract expiring at the 2016 season, the move makes a little sense. Vannett’s blocking ability will hopefully give Jimmy Graham more opportunities to split out wide.

The Seahawks continued to try and fill depth at running back when they picked Alex Collins in the fifth round and Zac Brooks in the seventh.

I don’t really understand

why the team picked up three running backs, but I’m also not a general manager, and I don’t know how Thomas Rawls will be after a breaking his ankle.

I was a fan of the Kenny Lawler pick in the seventh round. Since he went to school in California, I got to see him play a few times.

He was pretty consistent for the University of California and has size and length that the Seahawks lack from most of their wide receivers.

Now we’ll all have all summer to speculate the impact these guys will make before their week one game against the Dolphins.

SPORTS

EDITOR: ZAC HERETH | sports@cwuobserver.com

Outdoor/Recreation

Challenge accepted

Challenge course sets the stakes 50 feet high

By Hunter Ventoza
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Towering above the large grass field just north of campus, is the 50-foot tall “alpine tower,” which draws eyes to Central’s seldom-used challenge course.

The size alone makes the challenge course hard to ignore. Built in 2009, with a focus on team building, the course provides a physical challenge for students, staff and their friends to conquer.

According to Melissa Robertson, climbing and challenge course coordinator, participants work on group dynamics as well as improving leadership skills when attempting the course.

Inclusivity is a large part of the experience, with equipment and instruction all provided by Central recreation for those who choose to participate.

The course is open from April 1 to Nov. 15, and is available for everyone to schedule a session at those times, Robertson said.

In addition to students and staff, community members can also book a day on the course. Although the cheapest reservations are offered to student groups, prices for visiting groups top out at \$1,500 according to the price guide.

The course can match participants with some of their biggest fears.

“I am afraid of heights, and I have done the course twice,” said Elizabeth Vidaurri, senior international relations major. “My favorite part was the zip-lining down at the end after finishing the course.”

Those who cannot get a group of four to 60 people together for the course, or who aren’t interested in paying upwards of \$500 for a three-hour session, can attend a program called “The Weekly Challenge.”

The Weekly Challenge gives individual students and non-students a chance to test their skills. The Weekly Challenge is hosted on Wednesdays at 5 p.m. and



McKenzie Lakey/The Observer
Nick Jacobus, student and facilities management employee, replaces boards on the 50-foot “Alpine Tower” of the challenge course.

costs \$5 for students and \$10 for non-students.

During the weekly climb, participants have the opportunity to climb the 50-foot tower or ride the giant swing.

For those interested in group reservations, three separate packages are available. The cheapest option offers low-challenge and ground-based activities, which means the main course obstacles aren’t required.

If groups want to use the high-level courses, which are the main attractions, more expensive second and third pricing tiers are required.

Pre-registration is mandatory for each group that wants to reserve the course. The pre-registration includes a questionnaire to give each group a more personalized experience. The questionnaire includes questions like, “How long have the members of your group known each other?”

“We try to generate revenue through outside groups,” Robertson said.

According to Robertson, the course has attracted employee groups from companies such as Yahoo.

While holding conferences nearby in Yakima, or on company trips at Suncadia, the challenge course is a way for such organizations to work on their group dynamics.

“The most important part of team building is reaching a common goal, like finishing the course,” Vidaurri said. “It really enhances interpersonal communication. If your partners don’t help pull you along the way, you will fall.”

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